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January 28, 2004 LB 46, 656

SENATOR AGUILAR: Per diem, that's correct.

SENATOR STUTHMAN: Yes. Yes. Okay, I think that's all the questions right now and I (inaudible) my time. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Stuthman. The question directly before the body is the motion by Senator Chambers to indefinitely postpone LB 656. Senator Synowiecki, followed by Senator Smith, Thompson, Aguilar, Chambers, Quandahl. Senator Synowiecki.

SENATOR SYNOWIECKI: Thank you, Senator Cudaback. Members, I rise with serious reservations with regard to LB 656, and these reservations extend mostly from what we made here in this body last year as a huge public policy shift encompassed in LB 46 in our shift toward more community-based corrections. And my concern with LB 656 really is driven by my membership on the Community Corrections Council. Senator Aguilar, what I'm...what concerns me is in...we may be looking at the potential of conflicting missions. We may be looking at the potential of conflicting motivations, which was encompassed in LB 46, meaning a move towards more community-based alternatives to incarceration. If we start having private for-profit companies running our county jails with an interest and a motivation in maintaining a high number of inmates, we're going to have a huge conflict with our policy, as stated in LB 46 as our motivations and our continuing work on the Community Corrections Council, and these private jails. My fear is that reimbursement to these private companies will be based upon, I would think, logically, the number of prisoners they got in their facility. And at the same...on...and we're opening up this to all the counties. This is not in particular to Hall County. And that we will then have, Senator Aguilar, again, conflicting public policies, conflicting missions. We would have a economic interest in these private companies to maintain a high number of inmates, while at the same time the state is embarking on a move towards developing a community corrections spectrum of services available to all the counties in the state of Nebraska. So my reservations with this extend primarily from public policy, from our motivations of what we're looking at, at the spiraling cost